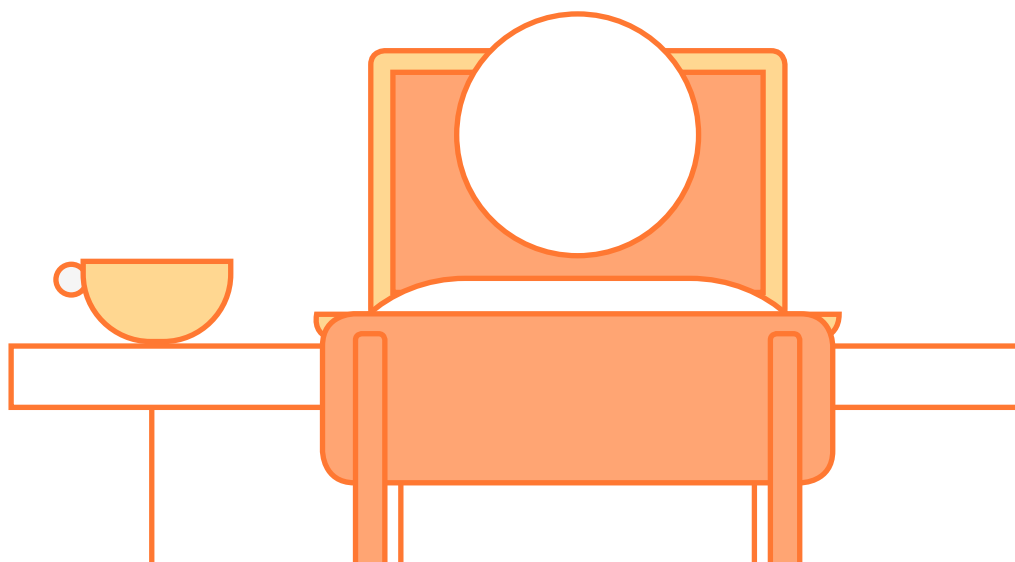


# A new way to work



How employees of  
the future are shaping  
the workplace



The workplace as we know it will not exist in the future.

The explosion of new technologies, the mass adoption of social media, the ubiquity of mobile and connectivity and the proliferation of devices: these are all catalysts for transformation.

But more importantly, a widespread demographic shift is ringing the changes, with millennials entering a workplace that they expect to fit with the modern world they have grown up in.

## By 2025, two-thirds of the workforce will be millennials



This is a generation that wants, and will demand, to work in ways unimaginable to their grandparents. And it's not just a matter of the year in which these employees were born; those who knew a world before the internet have fast adopted the millennial mindset.

So what does the future of work look like? How will organisations position themselves to better collaborate, integrate and innovate quickly enough to survive at the speed their customers demand?

IBM partnered with PureMatter to create the first-ever Future of Work Experience, inviting hand-selected “futurists” from across corporate, industry and social realms. The three-day event set out to rethink, reimagine and reinvent the future of work. The following key themes emerged:

- More intuitive technology that makes life easier without sacrificing human connections and relationships
- A more harmonious ecosystem of work and play
- A greater sense of purpose from work contributions
- A deeper sense of trust and value between employees and companies

IBM and the futurists applied design thinking to generate a number of predictions for the future of work.

## A digital generation

Given that millennials will constitute the majority of the workforce in the coming years, and many will rise to management roles, it's no exaggeration to say that they will shape the future of work for their generation – and for those to come.

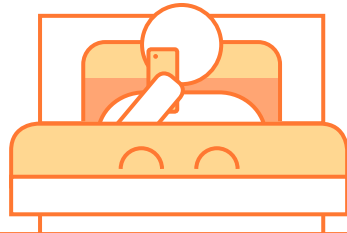
Millennials are defined by having a radically different mindset around technology to previous generations, and this inevitably translates into the workplace. They are digitally literate and use the latest tools to connect in innovative ways. Email no longer meets their needs: they use social tools to share ideas, find out what their peers are up to, form networks and solve problems.

Around 84% of millennials have a mobile device that they check before they even get out of bed. They expect technology, whether in their personal or work lives, to be delightful and engaging, and to serve their needs as efficiently as possible. They want applications that look like Angry Birds and operate like Twitter.

Already, employees are bringing consumer expectations to enterprise applications. Developers are meeting their demands by creating user-centric product experiences, applying design thinking methodology to the creation of both hardware and software. Design thinking is about finding ways to truly understand people and empathise with them; it prioritises desired outcomes, rather than features or functions.

**84%**

check their phones before  
they get out of bed



## The search for purpose

Only 19% of people claim to be happy in their jobs. While previous generations might have stuck to one employer for a lifetime without questioning the relevance of happiness, experts predict that millennials will take a more entrepreneurial approach to their careers. The employee, not the employer, will be in control. Employees will hop from job to job to find the employer who they consider to fulfil their own goals.

Shawn Murphy, CEO/Co-Founder of Switch & Shift, predicts that the workplace will become more individually focused. Employees will want to know not only what they're getting out of the workplace arrangement, but also how they are contributing to something important. Employees will become more interested in the idea of purpose – not only in terms of their own career advancement, but also with regard to alignment with their own values and goals.

An essential element of this nomadic approach will be the fact that, instead of looking to the company to nurture and promote them, people will use digital and social media to build their own communities and develop personal brands to put themselves into the positions they desire.

Millennials will also demand an end to stringent work patterns. Instead of rules about who does what, where, the workplace will evolve to put greater emphasis on benefits and flexibility – especially as millennials move into management roles.



Only  
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## Connecting to collaborate

As many as 74% of decision makers recognise that social technology can foster collaboration among customers, employees and partners – but only 20% feel that their companies are currently truly social. This is important because ideas about work location are shifting, with telecommuting increasing by 79% between 2005 and 2012.

Ted Coiné, author of *A World Gone Social*, believes that future collaboration won't necessarily reside at the office. Many people already work from home because it simply makes sense. Technology has made that possible today, and will do so even more in the future.

**The benefits re clear:**  
businesses that offer workplace flexibility increase engagement and motivation by

**80%**



The structure in which collaboration takes place will evolve to what Coiné calls the “Hollywood model.” For more than 100 years, individual actors have come together for specific projects. An actor's portion of the project could take two days, two months or two years. But once the project is complete, everyone goes their separate ways. Coiné fully expects this model, otherwise known as project-based work, to be a norm in the future.

The result of this shift will be that employees work in smaller groups, as small as half a dozen employees. This is a big shift from previous

generations, whereby a person might need to work within a 50,000-person company to feel he or she had a “spot” in the world.

The challenge for collaboration will be keeping employees feeling connected, says Jay Kuhns, Vice President, Human Resources, at All Children’s Hospital/Johns Hopkins Medicine. Employers must figure out how to keep the whole workforce connected and motivated, wherever they may be on a particular day. While the physical office won’t completely vanish in the next 10 years, companies will increasingly leverage emerging technology to better enable this connectedness and virtual culture.

## Creating culture

Today’s high-performing employees are motivated to work for what’s right, not just for stakeholders. They are driven by the desire to make the world a better place. In fact, 70% of millennials say an organisation’s commitment to the community would influence their decision to work there. The challenge for employers is how to harness the power of imagination, collaboration and disruptive ideas from the brightest and most passionate employees.

**70%**  
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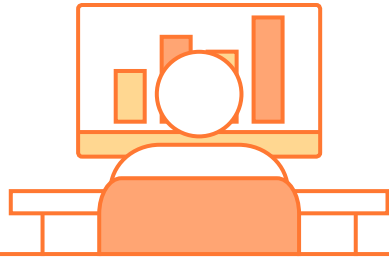
Cultural fit will become a primary reason to hire someone because employers will need teams they can trust to work together collectively, focusing on a single purpose. Cheryl Burgess, CEO of Blue Focus Marketing, suggests that having a strong team will become increasingly important as employees shift to becoming the brand of the future. Workplace culture will shift to allow people to express how they feel about the brand; companies will realise that it’s not possible to effectively communicate their brand externally if they can’t communicate it internally.

Ideas about leadership will change. Role-based leadership as we know it will shift to “project-based” thinking, predicts Brian Fanzo, Partner and Chief Digital Strategist at Broadsuite. Employees might work on community projects that have different leaders throughout an organisation. The C-suite won’t disappear as such, but when it comes to strategic planning for the company, the people who are the best fit for the team will make the decisions.

Management hierarchy will gradually flatten. Kevin Wheeler, Founder and President of the Future of Talent Institute, points out that more and more companies are eliminating the entire hierarchical structure, opting for a structure called “holacracy”. Wheeler gives Zappos as an example. This model radically changes how an organisation is aligned, how decisions are made and how power is distributed.

## The role of technology

**Social, mobile, cloud and analytics are allowing employees to personalise the work experience as never before, and drive both internal and external collaboration.**



Pacesetters are using these technologies at a higher rate than their peers, and experiencing significant results, with 9 out of 10 organisations reporting a competitive advantage. While the use of technology will continue to rise in the future, security and privacy will remain key points of concern for leaders.

The continued evolution of the workplace to become more flexible and fragmented and will drive the rise of new technologies. Companies will leverage them to keep employees connected and able to exchange ideas remotely. There may be some resistance to this, but managing this process will be a differentiator for organisations.

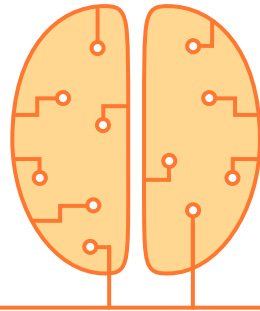
Much of this change will take place in the cloud as organisations strive to cut costs and improve flexibility; of course, security will overlap all technology to ensure corporate data is safe.

Leaders must step up and embrace technology. Many currently admit that they don't use, or don't know how to use, some current technologies. This will not be acceptable in a leading-edge organisation of the future.

Technology is a large part of the equation, says Burgess. But what is really important is that people will change the structures in which they operate. She explains that in order to take advantage of social analytics and other technologies in the workplace, we must have security and trust in a relationship. Because it's really very much about people: about creating a world in which employees are empowered to be a part of something bigger than themselves.

Big data and analytics will be the biggest game changer. Employers will use analytics to help find the best person for the job and identify future leaders. Email analytics will streamline communication for employees, prioritising and personalising messages based on user behaviour.

**Cognitive systems will transform the way work is done and the way leaders lead.**



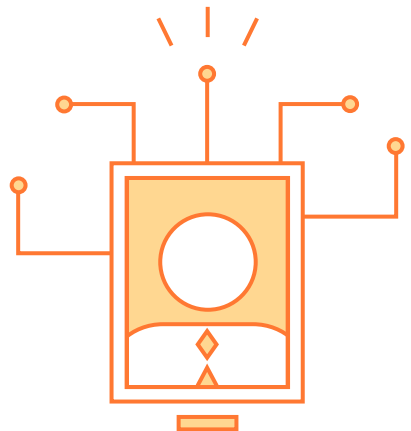
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## Conclusion

A people-focused culture will benefit the next generation of workers as companies focus on building trust and prioritising employee needs. When companies start embracing these changes, the workplace will transform into one that promotes enhanced collaboration, co-creation and creating more freely.

Joel Comm, CEO of Joel Comm Inc., predicts that when companies fail to keep up with trends and deliver on the needs of true talent, they will run into trouble. As a result, companies will not be able to retain quality employees – worse, their competition will snag their best talent, and they will be left behind.

**By investing in the future today and adapting to the needs of future generations, businesses will secure their position as the desirable employers of tomorrow.**





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